

The PULPIT

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THE PULPIT

The Helplessness of Man

This catastrophic age has brought to all the consciousness of the fact that, in himself, man is powerless to bring a better world. The wiser a man is, the more strongly he is convinced of his helplessness. L. P. Jacks was known as a man of great wisdom, but listen to his words of humility as he gives them in *The Confession of An Octogenarian*:

"I hear great talk about the Kingdom of God and the Brotherhood of Man, this mainly from the churches; and about certain ideal social systems. But when I look into myself I see at once that I lack the personal qualities I should need to play a worthy part in the Kingdom of God. . . . I am too imperfect a man for the heroic life I should have to live, for the noble deeds I should have to do. I am not wise enough, not humane enough, not valiant enough for life under any ideal system. . . . I am lacking in patience, the self-control, the moral skill, the discipline, that would be required of me. I am aware of habits in myself which would constantly trip me up, and perhaps trip other people as well.

"And I cannot help observing the same thing in you. . . ."—*H. Richard Rasmussen, University Church (Presbyterian), West Lafayette, Ind.*

'Playing God'

Our new era demands men of independent spirit whose independence is humble enough to admit its dependence on God. In one of his rare moments of humility, Henry Adams observed that "man knows mighty little, and may some day learn enough of his ignorance to fall down and pray." Unfortunately we find it difficult to admit our ignorance when we have made everything from radar to atomic bombs. So, we have been playing God; but unfortunately there is much truth in the comment of Harold Phillips that when man tries to be God he winds up acting like the devil. "If a man be in Christ," he never makes the mistake of playing God. He knows his limitations because he knows himself. He knows the devil in himself and that nobody but God can deal with that devil. John Stuart Mill was somewhat overoptimistic when he noted for world consumption that "the Devil is dead." By neat and precise arguments he wrote "finis" to the devil of popular theology; but the

devil in men was more, much more, than his arguments could eliminate. As a matter of record, the devil in himself was much more than the optimistic Mill could manage!—*Harold B. Walker, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.*

Blind, She Saw Beauty

Frazier Hunt, noted correspondent, tells how one July afternoon he set out on horseback to visit Helen Keller's cabin in the Canadian Rockies. Along the trail through the woods a wire had been stretched to guide Helen when she walked there alone. He saw her coming and thus describes her:

"I sat motionless while this woman who was doomed to live forever in a black and silent prison made her way briskly down the rough, uneven path, walking with her body completely relaxed, her face radiant. She stepped out of the woods into a sunlit open space directly in front of me and stopped by a clump of wolf willows. Gathering a handful, she breathed their strange fragrance; her sightless eyes looked up squarely into the warm face of the sun, and her lips, so magically trained, pronounced the single word, 'Beautiful!' Then, still smiling, she walked past me.

"I brushed the tears from my own inadequate eyes. For to me none of the wonders of this exquisite highland had seemed beautiful: I had felt only bitter discouragement over the rejection of the piece of writing I had set much store on. I had eyes to see all the wonders of the woods, sky and mountains, ears to hear the rushing stream and the song of the wind in the treetops. It took the sightless eyes and sealed ears of this extraordinary woman to show me beauty, and bravery!"—*G. S. Nichols, Collegiate Methodist Church, Ames, Iowa.*

Our Casual Faith

Charles A. Wells tells the story of the blond German lad of eighteen who crashed in his burning plane during the Battle of the Bulge. He struggled out of the flaming cockpit and lay helpless until a Red Cross nurse and a sergeant found him. With their help the lad fought to his feet and painfully lifted his shattered arm in the Nazi salute. Then, while he stood there, he lifted his eyes and spoke through his bleeding lips. "My part—it is finished," he said. "Heil Hit-

ler." Then he collapsed into silence, a witness to his faith's end.

God forgive us, "we light be of our casual creeds." We Christians are shamed by the passion of men for false gods and stupid. We came close to the gates of fumbling with timidity to a tepidness, while "loyal" pagans nearly the world. Which of us would the temerity to say in death's part—it is finished. Hail Jesus!—*Harold B. Walker, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.*

The Church and Immortality

During the First World War Henri Bergson, the French philosopher, and Lord Balfour came to America to enlist the aid of Americans in the cause of the Allies. At a meeting in New York, they went to the home of Joseph Choate where they engaged in a long discussion. Asked later the subject of the conversation, Mr. Choate replied "mortality." Ralph Connor, who served in the First World War and a few of two years in the trenches, back saying he had never met anyone who did not believe in immortality.

However, it would be too much to say that the minds of modern men are much occupied with their survival after death, except in brief moments of grief and anxiety. The whole of our day is such as to allow us no concern about what follows. The church is to be rebuked for being surrendered its original belief in declaring its faith.—*A. C. Nasby, Edison Park Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill.*

A New Beginning

Death is not the end; it is a new beginning. Death is not the master of the house; he is only the porter at the King's lodge, appointed to open the gate and let the guests into the realm of eternal life. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The range of our three-score-and-ten is not the limit of our life. Our life is not a land-locked vessel enclosed within the shore-line of seventy years. It is an arm of the sea. And so we must build for larger waters. We are immortal. How, then, shall we live to the prospect of eternal tomorrow?—*Jowett.*

The Pulpit

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How Easy Is Evil?

By RALPH W. SOCKMAN

SOMETIMES events become so confused and moral problems so complex that it behooves us to look back to the beginnings of things. Ours is such a case. And this morning I want to go back with you to the Garden of Eden.

For many people the story of Eden presents a stumbling block. They cannot reconcile the Genesis account of man's fall from a state of innocence with the scientific theory of man's evolution from primitive savagery. But when we turn to the biblical story of man's creation, we read that "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." These first chapters of Genesis, therefore, must be read as the history of the soul. The Garden of Eden is the birthplace of the human conscience. As such its date and place need not disturb us. The date of Adam is eter-

nal and the geography of Eden is the human heart. The drama of Eden has been played again in our day on the most dramatic and colossal scale ever staged. We can recall the scenes in that ever recurring drama acted in the third chapter of Genesis.

THE SERPENT SPEAKS

When the curtain rises on Eden, the serpent is the tempter. The serpent represents the animal nature, the animal nature is a reality that lives on in us, primitive and troublesome. Poets have sung about the ape and the tiger within us. But some time ago a writer suggested that it will take far more than a mule and the parrot from our world. Yes, the parrot within us still repeats what we hear, thus keeping current rumors, gossip, lies, and propaganda long after logic and truth would lay them to rest. And the stubborn mule in us balks at going on new and better roads, thus blocking the way of progress. And certainly after recent tragic events we can scarcely say that we have risen above the ape and tiger. Right now the so-called civilized world resembles all too much the cages of an international zoo wherein sit those who ape the suspicious actions of the others. And as for the tiger in us, the twentieth century, though not yet half spent, has shed more blood than any century in human history. The animal still lives and speaks within our bodies and educated minds. More than one

young man now listening will bear witness that often in the evening hours, when the office duties are over and the conscience has been dulled by fatigue or drugged by drink—that at such times they have heard the call of the wild from the beast within.

SELF-INDULGENCE RAMPANT

In the Genesis story the spokesman of the animal nature is the serpent, who, according to the record, "was more subtle than any beast of the field." And how subtle he is as he says to Eve, "Hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden'?" And the woman replied, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'" And the serpent answered, "Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

How subtly the serpent made his appeal! He set the woman looking not at the good things of the garden which she might enjoy but at the forbidden fruit. And when the mouth begins to water for forbidden things it seems to drain off the brain cells, and the mental batteries of discrimination and resistance grow weaker. The woman begins to question whether there is anything in the garden which should not be tasted. What are these appetites put into our bodies for? If God gave them to us, why not indulge them? Why not obey our impulses? Let us enjoy them. These old prohibitions and restraints which we call moral, were they not put over on us by Puritanical ancestors who did not want others to enjoy what they were afraid to enjoy themselves? Away with these old-fashioned "Thou shalt nots"! Get rid of your inhibitions and live the full free life! Such was the implication of the serpent in Eden and such was the doctrine of self-indulgence purveyed in the popular writing which followed the last war.

HITLER'S NEW GOSPEL

The same trend of thought made its way into certain national philosophies. In the preface to a recently published book entitled *The Ten Commandments* are words of Adolf Hitler as reported by a former citizen of Germany, Herman Rauschnigg: "It is not merely a question of Christianity and Judaism. We are fighting against the most ancient curse that humanity has brought on itself. It's got to get out of our blood, that curse from Mount Sinai! That poison with which both Jews and Christians have spoiled and soiled the free, wonderful instincts of man and lowered them to the level of dog-like fright. . . . The day will come when I shall hold up against these commandments the table of a new law. And history will recognize our



movement as the great battle for liberation, a liberation from the curse of Mount Sinai. . . . This is what we are fighting against, the curse of so-called morals. . . . idolized to protect the weak from the strong in the immortal law of battle; against the so-called Ten Commandments, against them are we fighting."

Such was the nazi idea of the way to build the brave new world by getting rid of the old moral restraints. It was but the modern version of the serpent's invitation in Eden to eat and become as gods.

And the record is that when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave unto her husband and he did eat.

Then what happened? The record is: "And the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they made aprons of fig leaves. And they heard the voice of God walking in the garden and they hid themselves." In this figurative fashion the Genesis writer asserts that the eating of forbidden fruit is inevitably followed by the sense of shame and the sense of fear.

Why do men blush with shame and blanch with fear after yielding to certain impulses? Some would say that it is only because of social conventions. Their contention is that we count some things right and some things wrong because we learned it so from parents and teachers. The persons who think that all moral laws are a mere social convention because we learned them from our elders make a mistake in their reasoning. We all, for instance, learned the multiplication table at school. A child who grew up alone on a desert island wouldn't know it. But surely it does not follow that the multiplication table is merely social convention, something which human beings might have made differently if they had liked. The multiplication table is in a different class from the American convention of driving on the right side of the road. The rule of the road in England is to drive on the left side, but the rule that two times two makes four holds good in England as well as America, in China as well as in Africa.

ARE MORAL CODES DONE?

So is it with our moral codes. Some of them are mere conventions which vary with different countries and different times. Jesus recognized that when he said about certain practices: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you." Some things which were considered right in the days of Joshua were to be considered wrong in the days of Jesus, because "new occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth." But it does not follow that all moral codes rest on the shifting sand of social convention. There are some ethical laws so basic that they rest on the bedrock of human nature, they are embedded in the very foundations of life. For instance, there is no place or time in which double-crossing a friend has been counted a virtue. Or again, do you know of any place or time in which cowardice has been regarded as praiseworthy? Men have differed as to what people you ought to be unselfish to, whether

to family or to fellow countrymen or to all men; pure selfishness has never been admired.

No, when we cut through the layers of moral convention which change with time and place, we come to certain bedrock distinctions on which common universal decency rests. The Ten Commandments are not invalidated by the nazi codes formulated in Munich beer hall. And the newspaper editor was when he recently called for less talk of the Big Five, meaning the five great nations, and more talk of the Big Ten, meaning the Ten Commandments. No nation or no group of nations is strong enough to override the laws of God expressed in the moral commandments of Sinai.

OUR 'BRAVE NEW WORLD'

Why do shame and fear follow the eating of the forbidden fruit? Do you say it is just because we were taught to be afraid and ashamed of certain things? Well, who taught Adam and Eve, our so-called parents? With profound psychological insight the Eden story reminds us that embedded in the original texture of man's nature is something deeper than social convention for it sometimes drives man to go against the conventions of his family, his class, his nation. That something is what we call conscience. And when we try to escape from it, it follows us as the albatross followed Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and as "Hound of Heaven" pursued the footsteps of Frank Thompson. We may prate about a new order of things free from the moral restraints of Mount Sinai as did certain sophisticated writers and as did the bores of Hitler, but the hoped-for brave new world turns out to be a timid old Eden.

ALWAYS—A SCAPEGOAT

And now on with the Genesis story. The account is that God called to the hiding Adam and Eve. They had tried escape. Now they try evasion. Adam puts the blame on Eve, and Eve says the serpent beguiled her. For all this attempted evasion God gives a verdict. As the record has it, God puts enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. The woman he says, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow." To the man God says, "Because thou hast heeded unto the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree . . . cursed is the ground for thy sake." Through this oriental imagery shines the truth that sin, which begets the sense of shame and fear in the heart of man, spreads its effect from inner discord to outer disharmony. How sound the psychology of Genesis! When we do wrong, we seek to put the blame on someone else. This scapegoat complex is as rife to this day as ever.

When we entered World War I in 1917, we thought that the Germans were the primary cause of calamities. If we could get rid of the Huns we would make the world safe for democracy and free from war. We killed millions of Germans and lost millions of brave lads in killing them. But when war was over, the world was not set right. So we looked around asking, "Who's to blame?" We

aming one another, with bitterness between whites and Negroes, between Roman Catholics and Protestants, between Jews and Gentiles. We Protestants divided into the two opposing camps of Fundamentalists and Modernists. Shall we allow such a deplorable situation to develop again? Well, there are only two ways of just that. Under God, it must not happen again.

We must be Christian enough to bring our economic and industrial, our racial and religious differences to the council table. We must pray for patience and wisdom to keep conferring until we find peaceful solutions in the tense situations between management and labor in order that a needy and war-depleted world may be rebuilt. Nor must we allow the scapegoat committee to divide the nations which stood so gallantly together as allies during the war. We fought the war against Germany and Japan. Many talk now as if we should make peace with Russia and England. Russia and England are not our enemies. And there is no need for them to become so, unless the nations yield to the selfish old Eden spirit of shifting the blame to others.

FROM GARDEN TO JUNGLE

We need to revive a practice common to our godly fathers. They were accustomed to begin and end each day with private or family devotions, and in those moments of prayer or Bible reading they felt God's presence upon them, they confessed their sins and cleansed their minds and motives. Each of us must look to our shortcomings and thus avoid the old sin of Adam and Eve—the sin of evasion by seeking to put the blame on others.

Go back to the Genesis story. The record is, "The Lord God sent them forth from the Garden of Eden." This is the sequence of sin. The attempt to escape by flight, the attempt to evade by shifting the blame, and the eviction.

Out of the garden into the jungle. Genesis puts the story in oriental figure of speech. But modernity has outgrown the logic of Genesis or the lines of the story:

There are two laws discrete,
Not reconciled—
Law for man, and law for thing;
The last builds tower and fleet,
But it runs wild,
And doth the man unking.

When the children of God follow their lower animal nature they unfit themselves for the gardens of peace, red, decent, satisfying life. The truth of that fact is being dramatized in the trial at Nuremberg just as it was in the story of Genesis.

EVIL DEFEATS ITSELF

A few years ago a friend of mine called my attention to an intriguing title in Kipling's *Second Jungle Book*. The caption of the story was "Letting in the Jungle." The author gives one of those intimate imaginary pictures of the animal kingdom surrounding a village in India. These denizens of the jungle plot the downfall of the village. A migration of the elephants,

lions, wild boars and their bestial brothers moved toward the human settlement. No blood was shed. But the crops were destroyed, the buildings peeled to pieces, the inhabitants driven away, and the once thriving village was left like an abandoned anthill. In the days of Kipling the jungle lay close upon the settlements of men in India. And the jungle lies close upon the settlements of man in America and Europe and Asia today. The war has revealed how thin is the veneer of civilization, how short the road from the garden to the jungle.

THE ROAD OF REDEMPTION

Yes, evil defeats itself. Self-indulgence takes the edge off pleasure. Self-centeredness leaves one in loneliness. The end of the egoist is the darkness of disappointment. The abuse of power brings about the loss of power, as the dictators demonstrated and as czars in all realms eventually discover. Evil leads to shame and fear, then the attempt to escape, then the effort to evade responsibility, then eviction from the garden to the jungle. Such is the story of Eden and its logic has not been outlived.

Our Bible begins with this Genesis story of a gate closing behind those who have sinned their way out of a garden. Our Bible closes with the vision of a gate opening into a holy city, wherein stands the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. The road from the closed gate of Eden to the open gate of Revelation runs by way of the cross. But it is the road of redemption. And it is the road which America and the nations must travel if they are to reach the promised land of peace.

Yes, it is the road which you and I must take if we are to enter the life which is life indeed.

THE CHURCH on earth is so blemished that it is disfigured, so stained that it is dark. But this fact remains: It is the one place on earth where rank and class are forgotten; where good and bad alike are unworthy because they measure themselves by Jesus Christ and worthy because they are upheld by his grace; where all are one—"one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." If the church did no more than offer that sacrament of love, the church would still remain the essential fellowship without which all other comradeships fester as they decay.

GEORGE A. BUTTRICK.

THERE is a better world than we have seen. It is a world of personal fulfillment and of the good life for society. But we shall never find it until we leave behind us all our doubt and hesitation. It is the world of which Jesus spoke with such assurance. It is the kingdom of joy which is given to those who, without tether or shore line, give themselves to God's love and trust him to fill their lives with beauty and gladness.

RUSSELL E. REES.

FAITH is not belief in spite of evidence; it is life in spite of scorn of consequences.

KIRSOPP LAKE.

Life Triumphant Over Death

By RALPH CANFIELD McAFEE

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. John 11:25-26.

But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep. I Corinthians 15:20.

WE HAVE BEEN drawn here on this Easter Sunday morning by a desire to register our belief in "the most significant phenomenon in human history, namely, the origin of Christianity." We have not come to display new possessions nor to visit old friends. The urge that brought us into this church this morning came from a far deeper center in our innermost being. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, his living triumph over the grave, his guarantee of eternal life for all who believe—these amazing facts lured us here to praise our God, the Lord of heaven and earth.



"The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fact as well attested as any other event of past history." Yet for modern Christians the resurrection is one of the most perplexing features of the Gospel story. That perplexity is pointedly voiced in a recent letter to the *Christian Century* from Frank G. Tyrrell, judge of the Municipal Court, Los Angeles, California. He relates that he has spent years on the bench in search, not for opinions or suppositions, but for facts on which to base decisions. As a faithful churchman, he is disturbed about the resurrection accounts in the Holy Scriptures. The records, he relates, declare that the dead body of Jesus came alive and left the tomb; that the risen Jesus in a reanimated body talked with the disciples and ate with them; and that he finally rose into the air and disappeared. Judge Tyrrell asks if anybody knows whether or not these are facts. He is justified in asking this question for his faith in the resurrection of Jesus is at stake.

THE BIBLE RECORDS

The question the judge raises is both legitimate and imperative. We are bound to answer it as frankly as it is asked because many other believers in Jesus Christ our Lord are likewise perplexed. For the New Testament records present intellectual difficulties. The effort to harmonize all the details concerning the resurrection reaches an artificial result which satisfies only the unthinking literalist. There are some few passages which imply that the physical body of Jesus

came alive—was "reanimated." There are more instances in which his reappearance is described as material—that is, that he had a "resurrection body." The Gospel stories as a whole preponderantly support the non-material conception. St. Paul clearly believed that Jesus arose in a "resurrection body" or "spiritual body," as we learn from his recounting of the appearances of Jesus to Peter, to the twelve, to the five hundred, to James, to the apostles, "and last of all unto one born out of due time" to St. Paul himself. St. Paul implies that these appearances were all of the kind with his own—non-material, spiritual-body appearances. Read I Corinthians 15:40 and the following: "Celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial. . . also is the resurrection of the dead . . . it is sown in a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION

The Christian faith does not depend upon ability to bring into harmony two different kinds of accounts. You did not come here today to register your belief that 1900 years ago a man died, was buried, and then re-entered life in triumph over physical death. To base your Easter faith on such a statement would mean that you held an incomplete faith to that degree a non-biblical belief. To confine your Easter faith to the Bible accounts of the resurrection of Jesus would be to throw the resurrection out of focus. We entered God's house to worship him because we believe in the total event of which the resurrection is only one incident. That total "Event" is Christianity at the point of its emergency in history, so the editor of the *Christian Century* points out. That Total Event includes the human life of Jesus, his gathering of a small company of disciples, his teaching, his personal character and example, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the founding of the Christian community, and, running through it all, the response to these events on the part of the disciples who participated in them.

When we see the resurrection of Jesus in proper perspective, as an incident in the chain of incidents which taken together form that one Total Event, we call the emergence of Christianity into the world, we no longer find it imperative to harmonize the details of the several accounts of the resurrection of Jesus. Our knowledge of the facts of the life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus comes entirely from the Gospels, and on all vital facts they agree. They agree about his human life, his gathering of disciples, his teaching, his personal character and example, his death and resurrection, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the founding of the Christian community. When we thus see the resurrection in proper focus it becomes a glorious and convincing fact.

The Christian faith in the resurrection does not depend entirely upon records in the Bible. It is the Christian faith that Jesus Christ is "alive forever." That is no withdrawal into mysticism. We believe that Jesus is alive because in no other way can we account for the living church. Remember always

the disciples were afraid when Jesus died, that would not believe the reports about the resurrection—only after repeated evidences did they accept as their risen Lord. They themselves told us all Remember always that on the strength of their resurrection faith the new little church was nourished. Over the centuries the Christian church has kept the living memory of Jesus Christ. Today the Christian church is still the living memory of the resurrection. The primary evidence of the resurrection is not in the Bible records,—invaluable as they are. The Christian church, despite all its frailty, is the living and eternal proof of the resurrection.

THE DECLARATION OF JESUS

The Christian therefore believes in the resurrection because there is no other way to account for the living church; and second, because the long history of the church rests back upon the facts recorded in Holy Writ. Of all the assertions of the Bible concerning the resurrection, we instinctively turn to the words of Jesus: "I am the resurrection, and the life: that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." In these words Jesus asserted that life is triumphant over death. Here he does not argue a position; rather, he declares a truth.

We may well be grateful that the New Testament presents and that the creeds of Christendom end with what is a dramatic and logical conclusion based on the life in God: "and I believe in the life everlasting." The New Testament is not concerned about endless existence, but about eternal life. Most men would refuse to entertain the idea that this life is to continue endlessly. Many would refuse to accept the continuous existence of today's kind of life. They want something better. The Christian faith declares that believers in Jesus Christ our Lord will have eternal life in the Kingdom of God where they are sharing the life of God. And that eternal life begins now—and now—a present possession, not a future reward.

The Easter life is a triumphant life, so radiant that it is worth going on with always." This eternal life, guaranteed by the resurrection of Jesus, is the present sharing of the beauty, the goodness and the truth of God's life. The message of Easter 1946 in the language of our Lord fits into our lives. As C. W. Kegley has put it: "When life is lived with God in Christ it cannot end or be defeated. If your life expresses the purposes and shares the spirit of God, it cannot conclude with death or disaster. Life in God triumphs over death, because God's life knows not defeat or death. You are now participating in this abundant and eternal life if your purposes and spirit are in Jesus Christ, who said 'whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'" Remember always that the Easter message does not end with the assertion that Jesus rose from the dead. It was a great victory indeed, but the significant triumph is this: you may witness and experience this victory in your life by living it in him. The whole

purpose of Christ's death and resurrection was that through sharing his life we might also share his victory over death.

THE FAITH OF PAUL

The language of St. Paul throws a sidelight on this guarantee of Jesus: "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep." Evidently Paul was thinking of autumn harvest time. The first-fruits of the late summer are a guarantee of a full harvest in the fall. Those first-fruits were not exceptions to the general law of life, but were in harmony with nature's law that the full harvest would come. Just so, says the apostle, Christ having been raised from the dead, all those who share the kind of life and purpose he had will likewise know what it is to be victorious over death, sin and the grave.

All about us, men and women living in Christ's spirit illustrate how life is triumphant over death. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge furnishes a beautiful illustration. Calvin Coolidge, Jr., died in Washington at the dawn of what promised to be an abundant life. One year later Mrs. Coolidge wrote in her Northampton, Massachusetts, home:

You, my son,
Have shown me God.
Your kiss upon my cheek
Has made me feel the gentle touch
Of Him who leads us on.
The memory of your smile, when young,
Reveals His face,
As mellowing years come on apace.
And when you went before,
You left the gates of Heaven ajar
That I might glimpse,
Approaching from afar,
The glories of His grace.
Hold, son, my hand,
Guide me along the path,
That, coming,
I may stumble not
Nor roam,
Nor fail to show the way
Which leads us — Home.

'AS YOU WILL'

You and I may share in this eternal life which persistently and eternally triumphs over death on one condition: "he that believeth on me . . . shall live." You hold a "live option" on whether it is to be eternal life or death, and not even God will force you one way or another. There is an ancient story about a would-be cynic holding a tiny bird in hand and asking a sage: "What is in my hand?" The sage replied, "A bird." Then the cynic, proposing either to crush the bird to death or to give it freedom to fly away, asked the sage: "Shall it be death or life?" The sage replied, "As you will!"

Our Lord, whose triumph over death we celebrate today, arose that you, through faith in him, might always have life—abundant. He offers you now a present possession of triumphant, eternal life in his spirit. As you will!

The Inner Resurrection

By ELMER S. FREEMAN

Because I live, ye shall live also. John 14:19.

HUMAN LIFE as we know it swings as it were between two poles, the poles of birth and death. Life is created anew, we say, when a baby is born; life is snuffed out, so far at least as the evidence of the physical senses can tell, when a man dies. All that a man would learn, all that he would like to accomplish, all the impact he in person can make upon the world must be concentrated within the relatively brief space of threescore years and ten. No more than this can either science or philosophy tell us.



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Yet deep within the soul of man down through the ages has been an unsatisfied longing, an ineradicable conviction that life

is not the beginning and the end. Wordsworth is but expressing our common universal instinct in his famous lines on "Intimations of Immortality":

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

And even the stoic Roman philosopher Seneca, touched by the wand of faith, declared: "This life is only a prelude to eternity. . . . For that which we call death is but a pause, in truth a progress into life."

Let me try by a personal experience to illustrate what I mean. I was in San Francisco, my favorite American city, on one occasion shortly after the two great bridges had been built. It had been some years since my last visit, and I had not seen them. My train arrived after dark one evening, and I had to leave the city about eight the next morning. So in the early morning I went to the one place in the city from which both bridges can be seen. The Bay Bridge, spanning the beautiful harbor to Oakland, was quite clear, but the Golden Gate Bridge was invisible, completely shrouded in the early morning fog. Keenly disappointed, I waited as long as I could, as the sun rose higher, and at last I was partially rewarded. An extraordinary thing happened; the fog lifted, but only between the upright piers of the bridge, leaving the land anchorages still unseen, while the central part of the bridge, the suspension span, became clearer and clearer.

Then it was that I thought: How like our purely human view of life! We see it between the two piers, but the shore anchorages are invisible. Yet we *know* they must be there! I knew the shore anchorages of

that suspension bridge must be there, though I not see them, because I knew that those two piers of steel, more than 300 feet high, fixed to the solid rock and concrete, would not in a single hour sustain by themselves the immense weight and pull of the web of steel and cable dependent from them. They *must* be anchored; the cables must be carried on over the tops of the piers to solid rock on the two shores of the Golden Gate. I could see only what the sunlight and fog chose to reveal. I knew there was more to the bridge than I could see. I knew it did not end at the piers.

Is not that a parable of immortality, a parable for telling on Easter Day? So much of life as lies between the piers of birth and death we can see, but the sunlight of our mortal years reveals it. What lies beyond we cannot see, yet somehow we feel with as much certainty as I felt in viewing that bridge that there must be anchorage beyond, to which every girder, every cable is connected, or the bridge of life will quickly collapse into a meaningless tangle.

Instinctively, probably without thinking very fully about it, even casual Christians recognize this. Our ordinary thinking about life swings between the poles of birth and death. But the Christian religion comes to offer a wholesome corrective to so shallow a mode of thought. Our best-loved religious festivals are not Christmas and Good Friday, representing birth and death in Jesus' life, but Christmas and Easter, representing birth and rebirth, life and renewed life. Christmas is the entrance into human, earthly life and entrance into eternal, immortal life. The fog reveals only the central part of the bridge, to be sure, but we are convinced with a certainty which, though it would need further or more literal proof, does not depend upon the fact that the bridge is a roadway not from birth to death but from life to life. Christmas, as a Christian festival, is the entrance into the portion of Jesus' life which we cannot see; Easter is the entrance to that part of his life which we cannot see, but which goes on and on to its anchorage in God's eternity.

II

Again, Easter, as Winfred Rhoades says, is the Festival of the Forward Look, the Festival of the "Great Expectation" in this life as well.

Life that is in any way worth while looks ever forward, with eager aspirations, vivid purposes, beckoning dreams, shining ideals. Childhood looks forward to youth, youth to young manhood and womanhood, young manhood to maturity, maturity to a serene old age. Nobody looks forward to death; almost nobody looks forward beyond death. Even a man who is veterately skeptical as Clarence Darrow could describe himself as "a pessimist with hope." And many of us thrill to Phillips Brooks' great words: "Death is not the end of life; death is only a moment in the course of life!"

So the instinct of the church is right when, in the church year, it is to be swung like the suspension bridge between the two piers, we make one of them Christmas and the other one, not Good Friday but Easter.

ling the road from birth to death but from birth to birth.

we can easily make a great deal too much of Good Friday. I would not desire to minimize its observance, the day on which to commemorate Jesus' heroic and sacrificial death. But it is a mistake to lay so much emphasis upon the death of Jesus as to make it what Martin Niemöller, in an Easter sermon preached before the war, called "a full stop, with nothing to follow."

It is a mistake to make so much of the death of Jesus that our whole relationship to him depends upon his death. More and more I am impressed, as I study the life of Jesus, to find that he never suggests that his death will affect anyone but himself. The theologians have said that because Jesus died, we shall live. Those are not the words of Jesus. What he says, and again, in substance, is: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

I cannot see how Christians can ever be satisfied with the crucifix as a symbol of our faith. How can we keep perpetually before our eyes the dead and crucified Christ, the Christ still bound to the cross, and at the same time sing the Easter hymns, hear the reading of the Easter story, read again our Lord's words: "Because I live, ye shall live also"? I would not for a moment do away with the cross as a Christian symbol. I would shout from the housetops that it is an empty cross, a cross from which the Lord of life has been taken away, a cross which he has transcended and left behind forever.

While it is easily possible to overemphasize Good Friday, it is not possible too highly to value Easter, or to give it too much importance as the day of days which gives assurance that

... noble souls, through dust and heat
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger;
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer.

men, as Martin Niemöller says in his Easter sermon, thought they had heard the last word about Jesus at the ninth hour on Good Friday. His enemies thought they had said the last word when they saw him laid in the tomb. And they were quite willing to let it so. Jesus had disturbed them when they wanted comfort; he had made them uncomfortable when they desired comfort; he had made men discontented with anything less than the highest when they would have been satisfied with second- or third-best. Indeed, the enemies of Jesus tried all sorts of material means to destroy him—human courts, a rope of hyacinth, a wooden cross, a rock tomb, a wax seal, the swords of soldiers. They all failed. "He could not be taken out of them."

"He's alive!" cries the Roman centurion in Charles Francis Kennedy's play, "The Terrible Meek." "I can't kill him. All the empires can't kill him."

Christ is ever rising again. Day by day men seek to bury him under the debris of history, or embalm him in creed and phrase and definition, or immure him

within the walls of churches and institutions, or smother him under a load of the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, or stab him to death with the daggers of their sins. But always he rises, phoenix-like, from the ashes of the fires of selfishness and carelessness in which we allow his power over our lives to be destroyed. Ever and again he is lifted up out of the common things of life, a vindication of his life and a triumph over the powers that did him to death, and all men are drawn to him as irresistibly as the earth is held in its orbit around the sun. Before the world opens the empty tomb, telling us it is God who still has the last word, not ourselves; that on Easter Day life looks forward, onward, upward, God-ward.

III

"The resurrection sings humanity's dream of fulfillment," says Winfred Rhoades. But there can be no fulfillment except a fulfillment *in persons*. The resurrection has happened, but has it happened to us? The resurrection happened to the disciples, and, says Talmage Johnson, "they themselves went forth, resurrected from despair, to transform the world." As the character St. Peter says in James Allen Kestle's Easter play "When the Sun Was Risen,"

His promise he has kept;
He's shattered grave and death
And nevermore shall men
Want proof of immortality.

My heart grows strong again
And I shall run—no more
The vacillating Peter of the past.
I now go forth,—"The Rock."
Let men wreak vengeance on me as they will—
The rack, the irons, yea, even cross itself—
The message of the risen Christ is mine.

The resurrection happened 1,900 years ago—and then it happened again to a young man of the Italian village of Assisi whose name was Francis, and he left wealth, position, power and prospects to become "Il Poverello"—the little poor one—and by his example of how to live a life with self left out put under everlasting obligation to him every man and woman since who would learn to put material things in their true places in the scale of values.

The resurrection happened 1,900 years ago—and then it happened again to a young man in Bedford, England, a young man in his own words "the very ringleader in all manner of vice and ungodliness, saying to God, 'Depart from me, for I desire not knowledge of thy ways,'" and from a certain moment John Bunyan, hearing "three or four poor old women sitting at a door in the sun, talking of the things of God," became the man who could write *Pilgrim's Progress*, a book which has probably influenced more people toward Christian living than any book ever written, save the Bible itself.

The resurrection happened 1,900 years ago—and then it happened again to an eight-year-old girl, blind, deaf and dumb, when a kindly, patient and understanding teacher came into her home, and Helen

Keller veritably rose from a grave of silence and uselessness to be a woman "essentially gay, spirited and sturdy," as Robert Coates describes her.

The resurrection happened 1,900 years ago; has it happened again to any of us? Will it happen? Shall we be different men and women because we have worshipped this morning at the beloved shrine of the risen Lord?

So the message which this Day of Resurrection speaks and sings and prays into our hearts is more than the message of the bridge half revealed by the fog, symbolizing the going on of life beyond what we can see—great as that message is. It is more than the good tidings that the last word in life is always God's word, not man's, that what man would destroy God will rebuild, that he whom man in hate would kill on Good Friday God in love will restore to life again on Easter Day—thrilling as that gospel is.

The Day of Resurrection comes to say to us that God is for all eternity on the side of life, not of death. The Easter gospel peals forth the tidings that wherever there is human sorrow the compassion of God can turn it to joy; wherever there is human pain there is healing to come from the hand of God; wherever there is human frailty the strength of God can undergird it; wherever there is human doubt the grace of God can dispel it.

The resurrection of the human spirit—the inner resurrection—that is our message today. Earth's broken arcs made perfect circles; earth's fog-bound bridges revealing their heavenly anchorages; earth's little hopes transformed into great fulfillments—all this telling us that "eternity affirms the concept of this hour," the hour in which again we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

TO TRANSLATE the Einstein formula into the atomic bomb required years of painstaking effort by the world's best brains. To translate "one world" into a living ethic of peace will require no less—and perhaps more. It is not a soft-hearted job of teaching us to love our enemies, or even our friends; it is a hard-headed job of sharing the same world with all sorts of people, whether we particularly like them or not. And sharing implies justice, and justice implies some kind of world-wide organization to pronounce and enforce judgment; and this in turn demands, in addition to our best brains, the support of the plain people of the world, in all countries and of all races.

THIS WEEK MAGAZINE.

TOMORROW's stratoliners and television sets will not save civilization, as long as man skimps on the things that pertain to human need and human progress, on which he should keep his mind and heart lest he be wrecked as in other civilizations before this. There is only one optimism worth holding, and that is the hope and the faith of the eternal God, whose laws are eternal; faith in Christ.

DAVID K. BARNWELL.

The Light That Never Failed

EDWARD KRUSEN ZIEGLER

Amid the darkness the Light shone, but the darkness did not master it. John 1:5 (Moffatt).

He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. John 13:30.

NEXT to the cross, light is the most beautiful expressive symbol of the Christian life and experience. It is one of the great words of the Gospel of John. It is the symbol of the cleansing and guiding power of Christ which comes into the human life

when we accept and follow him. Salvation is like the dawn; Christ is the rising of righteousness.

Sin, on the other hand, is darkness—stumbling, groping, uncertain, hesitant, fearful. It is the time when we find peace and release when the light of Christ shines into the dark mazes of our lives. Our two texts this morning point a great and illuminating contrast. Judas Iscariot, the man who by his deliberate



choice turned his back on the light, and walked into impenetrable, starless night; and Christ, the Light of the world, whose shining could not be overwhelmed and can never be, by any power of evil.

JUDAS—STARLESS NIGHT

The story told in John 13 is tender and beautiful; yet it has elements of deep tragedy. Jesus had many things to tell the disciples. Those last farewell hours were to be given over to his last and most profound teachings, his final words of counsel to his friends. But, to his sorrow, he found that they were not ready. He found them bickering over places in the coming Kingdom. Peter wanted to be prime minister; and Judas wanted to be secretary of war; Judas hoped to be secretary of the treasury. Jesus could not go on. He took a towel and girded himself, poured water into a basin and then stooped and washed their feet, one by one. It was the menial task of a servant, but Jesus did it to teach them that all true greatness comes through humble, loving service. None of us can achieve greatness through personal ambition or scrambling for place and power, but only as we serve the feet of our brethren in humble service of one another, ever kind, motivated by love.

But when the hearts of the disciples were chastened, Judas was still there, unrepentant and bitter. So Jesus had to get rid of him. There could be no treason in the last intimate fellowship. He sent him away, and Judas walked out into the darkness. But the road that final curtain was a long road. Judas did not

enly. He had long been plotting that mischief. How did he get that way? Let it be said in passing that a loving Father God did not choose Judas for treason. He made his own choices. God never chooses men to do evil. He wills that all men shall find light and salvation. If we go wrong it is because we jump over the very barriers which God has put in our way and spurn his great gifts of love and help.

EXPLAINING JUDAS

There is never a good word for Judas in the gospels. Yet Jesus had high purposes in calling him, and lofty hopes of what he might become. He was not a villain nor totally bad. He was a Zealot, an intense nationalist and patriot, who would gladly have given his life for his nation. He had good business ability, and was intelligent. Jesus gave him the same training, the same friendship, he gave the others. Then why did he go so tragically wrong? We read that Satan entered into him at the Last Supper. Yes, but that was only the final break. Satan does not come with cloven hoofs and a spiked tail, breathing fire and smoke. If we did we could easily avoid him. His approach to us, as to Judas, is much more subtle. Often he comes in the guise of what seems to be a right and unselfish advice. So it was with Judas.

Judas' dreams of the Kingdom were always and only material and national. He looked for a Messiah who would come with vast power, raise a great army of patriotic Jews, drive the Romans into the depth of the sea, and restore the kingdom of David in its former glory. He expected Jesus to do that, to be a great military leader. When he saw the direction Jesus was taking, he was disappointed. Perhaps he saw more clearly than any of the others the implications of Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom—the grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying, the kingdom of the spirit, the law of suffering love. But he hardened his heart and would not accept it. He was not a royal when he understood. He put personal ambition ahead of the Kingdom of God. The last straw came when they all attended the banquet in Bethany. Mary broke a priceless vase of perfume and poured it on the feet of Jesus. And he did not rebuke her! No, to Judas' mind, he should have been engaged in recruiting an army of soldiers, resolute and armed, and Jesus was accepting the foolishly wasteful homage of a silly woman! It was too much! Judas hastened away and sold his knowledge to the priests.

LOVE THAT PURSUES

But note that even in the face of this final treachery, Jesus' love still pursues him tenderly and without let. What must Judas have thought as Jesus poured the ointment over his dusty feet, washed them, and then with a look of infinite pleading dried them with the towel? Where with he was girded? Later Jesus said, "One of you that dippeeth his hand with me in the dish is a traitor!" When they all began to ask themselves in consternation, "Can it be I?" Jesus did not betray

Judas. Peter gestured to John, leaning affectionately on Jesus, to ask who it could be. When John asked, Jesus whispered so that the others did not hear. Then, as a mark of special love and esteem, he dipped a morsel of bread in the broth and handed it to Judas. That was the last supreme gesture of love and pleading. But it was too late. Judas received it, ate it, spurned the love that prompted it, and no longer able to face Jesus went out into the night. Jesus never forced him. He does not force us. His love pursues us even to the last parting of the ways, as Francis Thompson so poignantly sings in "The Hound of Heaven."

When Judas went out, it would not have been necessary for John to write of the night; all these events took place after nightfall. But the night into which Judas went was one of his own making; not the comfortable night of stars and sleep and cooling breezes, but a dark, starless, impenetrable, horrible night of terror and death, an infinite spiritual night. This is the final end of all sin and rebellion against God! The wages of sin is death—absence of life; darkness—absence of light. We can see it again and again in our own time. When any person—or any nation—deliberately turns his back upon goodness and light, he goes out into the outer spiritual darkness of death and separation from Christ.

THE LIGHT NEVER FAILS

The tender love of God is like that; it pursues, penetrates, follows us, dispelling the darkness and letting in the sun. We cannot sweep out the darkness with a broom. We open the shutters and let in the light. We cannot sweep out spiritual darkness with a broom of good deeds. We must open our hearts to the light. When we look at the tragic life and death of a Judas, we wonder whether the light had failed for him. No, the light never fails. But it is possible for us to shut our lives and shut the light out!

Christ is the Light of the World. Wherever his light shines in the darkness—doubt, fear, misunderstanding, ignorance, anxiety, worry, injustice, covetousness, greed, cruelty, and all kinds of evil, must disappear. And this light is never mastered by the darkness. It is always the stronger. Surely Christ and his church, his Lightbearer, are the only rays of real light in the darkness which obscures the stars in our own time. The light has not failed. Men and even nations have barricaded their windows, and blacked out their views, but Christ's light still shines, and will dispel all the darkness after a while.

The light will not fail in your life. If you say "Yes" to the light, open your soul-windows toward it, it will shine in, and you will find life and radiance, peace, forgiveness, and power. If nations will walk in the light, they will find the way to national peace and prosperity and greatness. But we must say "Yes" to it, not deny and turn away from it. Will you receive the light for your own guidance?

All the light of faith, hope and love are gathered up in Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. If you and I live up to whatever of his rays we have thus far

seen, the full light of his radiance will soon come in and transform us, drive out all the darkness from the corners of our lives, and we will begin to reflect that light to others.

Commit your life, from now and forever to Christ, and forsake the darkness. Turn around, face the Light, put your hand in the hand of God, and go forward! However starless and impenetrable may the night have seemed to you up to now, you need not stay in darkness. For "amid the darkness the light shone and the darkness did not master it! In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

We sing, with George Matheson:

"O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's glow its day
May brighter, fairer be."

The Vision of Death

By HENRY HITT CRANE

IN THE HOUSE OF LIFE, and in the inner chamber of wisdom, I found the crystal of vision, in which one sees truth and not appearance.

So I asked to see Death, the puzzle, the dread, the set-tipped Sphinx of time, the enemy, the friend, the punishment and the reward.

As I looked into the crystal I saw two figures walking hand in hand, as two brothers: one was Life and the other was Death.

I saw a mother clasping her child; the Mother was Death and the child was Life. I saw a spring coming out of a mountain; the mountain was Death and the spring was Life. The spring widened to a river and swept on past cities into the sea; the sea was Death also.

I saw a motherly face, full of rest and home. The face spoke and said: "I am mother Death. When I quiet the infant that cries, it is quieted forever. When I still the sobs of women, they are still forevermore. With me all breaking hearts are healed, all tired feet are eased, all doubts are quelled, all murmurous rebellion hushed, all quarrels soothed, all agony over, all disappointment wiped away. It is I who enfold in healing peace all shattered homes, outraged loves, deceived trusts; all fires, fevers and perversions.

"I am the only democracy. In my bedroom kings and clowns sleep together, the knotted fingers of the slave and the soft hand of the rich man's favorite are atoms intertwined.

"Life is a question. I am the answer. Life is a thirst and a hunger. I am satiety. I am the stilling of desire. With me the bird that flutters in men's breasts folds its wings and struggles no more. I am the soft slumber of ambition. I am the relaxed clutch of greed. I am the cool ashes of passion."

Then as I gazed I saw the multitudes of all human-kind, that are, and were, and will be. There were laughing babes, romping children, eager youth, lovers, brides and grooms, men warring, working, weaving, idling, and women in beauty and unbeauty, kingdoms, armies, legislatures, councils, saints and sinners. And behind them all stood Death, watching them as a shepherd watches his sheep.

You Came Too Soon O Christ!

By MURRAY A. FIGG

He came too soon, this Christ. Men are not yet.—From 'The Wingless Victory,' play by Max Anderson.

YOU CAME too soon with your preaching, Christ. Do you recall that Sabbath when you delivered the sermon in the home town synagogue? You brought your text from Isaiah, that portion about preaching to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, freeing the



tives, giving sight to the blind. You said that the spirit of the Lord had anointed you for a person-centered ministry. Some of your relatives and friends listened eagerly. Some listened angrily, like your brother who grumbled: "Why do we have a fanatic in the family?" Others just looked out the window. A little later they were out of town.

Then you took your preaching everywhere, any place where

people would listen—in the thronging market place, on the quiet sea, in the friendly homes, on the rugged hillside, by refreshing wells. We read that the common people heard you gladly but that your words were not accepted by the chief people. They plotted against you. Even whole cities begged you to remain off their streets. So you tried to spend more time with your picked disciples. You told them that they were to be custodians of the divine mysteries, that they could do even greater works than you had done. You taught them. You disciplined them. They were so slow to learn. You washed their feet. They quarreled. Finally one denied you, another betrayed you. The rest were away when you were crucified.

You came too soon, O Christ, because your words are too idealistic for our stern, practical requirements. We are all like the young man who came to you in Judea and exclaimed: "You have something! I have the answer I seek!" But he went away, unchanged, because he could not fit your answer into the life he wanted to live.

You say, "He that would be greatest let him be your servant." Now that may be all right for certain types, but some of us were not made for servitude. It's contrary to our temperament. Besides, who was to play second fiddle when the first violin has all the solos?

You say: "He that findeth his life, shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." Who will lose his life for your sake, Christ? Will a political party do it in an election year? Will a church do it when the minister is persecuted by a vociferous minority? Will a nation do it by refusing to engage

itary war? Can you expect very many people
it?

I say, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall in-
the earth." But this is too soft for us. It is
e. The war taught us how to be hard, rugged,
Victory came through our bombers, tanks and
We shall maintain that spirit of iron. Our
th will cause our friends to appreciate us and
emies to fear us. In this way we shall inherit
earth.

trouble is, O Christ, you preach an absolute.
peak of love, truth, beauty, purity. These are
tes. There is nothing beyond. They elude our
They seem to be out of this world. You admit
ch when you say, "My Kingdom is not of this
Your own words give us a way out. That's
ve whittle them down, take the stretch out of
They just don't fit our realistic requirements.
a point to fixed stars in the firmament of values.
peak of the "Everlasting Yea" and the "Ever-
y Nay," as though a standard of right and wrong
een woven into the fabric of the universe. You
telling us that moral law is like the law of grav-
We cannot break it. We are only broken upon it
we do not heed it. Now it seems to us, O
g, that your ideas would work if the world were
f saints. But most of us are far from sainthood!
ps some day we can put your principles into
ce, but not now. Relativities are what we need!
absolute is too dangerous to apply. It is inflam-
"I bring fire," you say. Your words are too
tive. "The father shall be divided against the
and the son against the father; and the mother
t the daughter, and the daughter against the
r." Your ethic is too revolutionary. "No man
h a piece of new cloth unto an old garment . . .
r do men put new wine in old bottles." It is
or us to exercise expediency. Half a loaf is better
none. Careful compromise, clever caution, that
s along!

That's that you say, Christ? That Kaj Munk
for principles? That he exclaimed: "Be cau-
Was Christ cautious? Were the martyrs cau-
I prefer Jesus Christ! Hypocrites and whited
thres! That was what he called the political
s of his country. It is better that Denmark's
ons with Germany should deteriorate than her
ons with the Lord Jesus!"
Where did it get Kaj Munk? He was murdered!
true. But remember. I hung on a cross!"

II

came too soon, O Christ, with your ways of
together. You said that God was the Father of
e people, and that we are all brothers and sisters,
that you died for everyone. You told us to make
entral in all our relationships, that active good
ould hold us together in a brotherhood. But we
t live happily together in our national house! We
t get along with our neighbors who speak the
language. We stumble so easily upon the eco-
stone and then we blame others. We become

stubborn. There are strikes and rumors of strikes.
Land is untilled. Production lines shut down. Public
services cease. On a hillside long ago you gave us the
lesson of the loaves, but you evidently came too soon
with your spirit of sharing. We continue to place
profits above persons. Contempt is substituted for
sympathy. The part becomes more important than the
whole. We are not ready for your spirit of magna-
nimity.

It bothers us, too, Christ, to discover that some of
our brothers and sisters in the national house have dark
skins, some have slanting eyes, and some do not accept
you as the Messiah-Savior. Now we know that you
want us to love them. But it does seem easier if we
segregate them, at least those with colored skin and
slanting eyes. We get along fine if they keep their
places. When they live in houses we do not want,
and stay out of our hotels and restaurants, and don't
expect jobs like ours, then we do not have any prob-
lem. When they think they are our equals, and are
as good as we are, and make a fuss, then we have
trouble.

You think we should not be like that? But would
you live next to a Negro? Would you want a "Jap,"
even if he were an American, to live in your town?
Would you do business with a crafty Jew?

What's that? . . . That's right. You are a Jew!

Neither can we live happily in our international
house. We encounter as much friction abroad as at
home. For a time following World War I we tried
to make love concrete in our international life. League
of Nations, World Court, Kellogg-Briand Pact all
testified to the advance of the machinery of peace. But
we could not breathe your spirit into the wheels, and
again the earth was shaken by the tremors of war.
Collective security has become collective insecurity.
Suspicion, fear and power politics make us wonder if
we are now living in the postwar period or in a pre-
war era.

You told us to love our enemies. Why, we can't
even do that in peacetime! Why do I say this? Be-
cause the Potsdam agreement that sets up peace con-
trols over Germany was conceived in hatred and born
in vengeance. It is an economic and political blunder.
Economists agreed with statesmen that it would not
work. Even the army has been reluctant to enforce it.
Instead of loving our enemies by administering basic
humanitarian principles, we have taken away all their
heavy machinery and much of their light machinery,
have put them on a starvation diet, have eliminated a
quarter of their farming lands, while dumping four-
teen million more helpless people into their restricted
area.

You recommend, O Christ, that we meet evil with
good because evil for evil makes more evil, but we
think we know better. So confiscation is met by con-
fiscation, cruelty is met by cruelty, starvation is met
by starvation. World War I is met by World War II.
Will World War II be met by World War III? No
nation is spiritually strong enough to break the circle.
Evidently you entered too soon into our international
house, O Christ. We are not ready to apply your

gospel to foreign policy. It's too much of a risk. It's too costly.

What's that you say, O Christ? We can't avoid risks in life? Salvation of men and women depends upon somebody's taking risks? Ill will *must* be faced with good will?

That's why I say you came too soon. We can't take such risks! Our honor will not permit it. Our nation cannot afford to try it.

III

You walked too soon into our personal lives, O Christ. We weren't expecting you. We weren't looking for you. We were having such a good time in our own way that we were afraid you would get in our way. We are willing to entertain you and your ideas a little later, but this is too soon for convenience. We really are not prepared for you.

You speak of obedience. We talk of personal liberty. Obedience reminds us of regimentation. We have too much of that! There is the sound of a cracking whip in it. There is conformity in it. We don't want to conform to your will. We want to be free to choose.

You refer to discipline. "Strait is the gate, narrow is the way," you say. But why does it have to be so narrow? We have too many narrow people in the world! What do they get out of life? Do you want us to add to the number of crepe-hangers? We do not like discipline. It is too hard on us!

You talk of sin. But really, we aren't so bad, are we? We don't kill. We don't steal. We don't get drunk. We go to Sunday school and church worship. We visit our relatives. It seems to us, O Christ, that you came too soon with your words, "Repent ye, repent ye," as least as far as we are concerned.

What's that, O Christ? We have sinned? We are full of willfulness, prejudice, selfishness? We can even sin by doing nothing? We sin by turning our backs upon the heavenly vision? We sin by refusing to look at injustice and misery? You say that the sins of the respectable are more deadly than the sins of passion?

Yes, you came too soon to our personal lives. When you tell us to love you with all the heart, and mind, and body, we know we cannot do it—not yet. Come back again, but not too soon.

IV

Yet there are times, O Christ, when we think you do not come quickly enough; those are the times when we are bent with burdens, when we have reached the end of our rope. When affliction comes, we want you to hurry with your healing. When sorrow comes, we want you to hasten with your comfort. When we are weak, we need your strength. When other helpers fail, we need you, quickly!

Isn't it strange how much we want from you and how little we give in return? Does it hurt you to know that we want to use you for our own means and refuse to be used by you for divine ends? How we impose upon you! How odd of you, Christ, to put up with us!

The Purpose of Communion

A LENTEN MEDITATION

By CARL HEATH KOPF

HAVE you ever thought how true it is that Holy Communion is the central sacrament almost all the churches of Christendom? In what church you enter the sacrament is usually obvious. Our Quaker friends in their love of simplicity



use the bread and the cup as they do believe in the sacrament of silence.

Our Hebrew churches of the kind of communion, too, remember how surprised I was in the Temple Israel, here in London, to see the rabbi lift the communion cup which looked like the Passover. And who would think of the beginning of the first communion supper in the Upper Room, it was really

Passover. It was the Jewish custom, the Jewish sacrament.

But Jesus put into it a new content. We are Christian, but it is really a continuance of the Jewish observance. The Jewish Passover comes at the same time as our Holy Week. I remember that every Holy Week some Jewish neighbors on my street come to our house with a little package wrapped in tissue paper, and give us some unleavened bread for the Passover. And we eat the unleavened bread which is so precious to them. Try to think of the real meaning behind that unleavened bread.

Now what should the service of Holy Communion do for every worshiper? How shall we describe its fundamental purpose? Let us put it in five very simple words that will help us remember its purpose.

I

The Holy Communion is meant to help us look upward. Then it is meant to help us look backward. Then it is meant to help us look forward. Then it is meant to help us look inward. And last of all, it is meant to help us look outward. That ought to be easily remembered: upward, backward, forward, and outward.

These are the five purposes of Holy Communion. The first means simply that by this communion we try to lift our glance upward toward Christ in heaven and above Christ to the God who is above all. The reason for that is that we become too self-satisfied, too humanistic, too much content with our own frail lives. We miss the lifted glance toward God. We miss that upward look that is so essential to the life of a Christian.

You remember what Robert Ley said before

himself in his cell, as he gave his confession at Germany needed. Some people said this must be a forced confession. I don't believe it. I read the text of his statement and you know he is one of the greatest persecutors of the Jews in any. I have read every word of the statement and it rings true. No man could have made up these things under pressure. He said: "We have forsaken and therefore God has forsaken us."

There are two verdicts in this indictment. "We have forsaken God." The first part is true. They had forsaken God. A nation looking upon itself as all-powerful, looking upon its fuhrer as the finest God they had, and worshipping him—indeed that nation had forsaken God.

God had not forsaken them. That is, God had withheld himself away from them or from mercy. He was not unwilling to give his love to the German people. What Robert Ley meant is that God himself would not prevent the punishment that came upon a people who had forsaken God.

Now that is true for us. If I forsake God and his commandments which are very clear in the Bible; if I say, "God, I don't care who You are or where You are or what You are. I want to go against every law You have given me." If I say that, I forsake God. I will lose the respect of honest, honorable work. I will lose the respect of humility by becoming proud and rebellious and defiant.

And then it will appear that God has forsaken me. The real truth is, I will have forsaken God. A man who has left his wife, deserted her. She comes to me for counsel and tells me his attitude is that he has turned against her, and accuses her of not understanding him—while she has stayed right by the job. He never forsook him. He has forsaken her, and the impasse he is in now is not her fault. It is his. So the sorry pass we come to, humanly speaking, is God's fault. We have forsaken God, but God has not forsaken us.

The purpose of communion first of all is to give us an upward look into the truth of God—upward and the character of Jesus, so that by looking up and lifting our glances above the horizon of our earthly conditions and see someone who is better than we are and love someone finer than we have been.

II

It is not only this communion an upward look. It is also a backward look. That is, this communion goes back through the church with all its struggles and trials. It goes straight back to Jesus, through the apostles to the fathers of the Old Testament.

Jesus himself took this backward look. Some people think Jesus brought a new religion to the world. He brought a new interpretation of an old religion. He brought a new explanation of the old religion of the Hebrews. Jesus said: "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." He often spoke in the past tense. He said: "You have often said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say, love those who hate you. Pray for those who despitefully use

you." Jesus brought a new interpretation of an old faith.

So our service of Holy Communion goes back through the ancient church. It has history. It has a past. It has a record. It has tradition, and we gather up all that past richness as we partake of communion this very hour.

III

But not only is this communion an upward look toward God and a backward look through history. This communion is a reach into the future days of our own lives personally and of the world. It is meant to help us live better lives in the days ahead. It is meant to remind us of the bread of heaven and the water of life. It is meant to help us give up our sins and do better in the days to come.

People ask what defense there is against the atomic bomb, and scientists have agreed there is no defense on earth, except in the brotherhood of man. There is no defense except in making men and women unwilling to set the thing off, or to plant it in the city or drop it from a plane.

The only defense is in the will of human beings. That is why we want the world gathered around the life and purpose of Jesus Christ whose table this is. And when a man kneels in Holy Communion and feels the presence of Jesus Christ he is not very likely to wish to drop an atomic bomb.

That is why we are dealing with the highest form of defense I know: the defense that is built in the inner heart.

IV

But there are not only the upward, backward and forward views in Holy Communion. There is also the inward look. That means that I look at my own soul without using rose-colored glasses. It means that I search my heart. "Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me." Most of us don't have to look very long or very far.

But then what do we do? We look within and then most of us begin to rationalize and say: "My grandfather was a weak man, too, and that explains me." Or we say, "After all, I suffered illness when I was a boy," or, "My neighbors aren't doing much better. I know somebody even worse." Thus we explain and rationalize until our convictions float away like vapor, and we have not cleansed our inner heart at all.

Holy Communion is meant to be an inward heart-searching to see if there is any hidden anger, if there is any unholy lust, if there is any bitterness, if there is any jealousy, if there is any laziness in things we know it is our duty to perform. We are supposed to look inward and look very deeply and when we see what is wrong the Holy Communion is meant to be a chance to cleanse it out by the power of God and the power of Christ and his forgiveness.

That is perhaps the fundamental purpose of Holy Communion—this inward heart-searching. Not to become morbid about it, not to be too introspective—but it doesn't hurt any of us to look within ourselves once in a while and see what kind of people we really

are. Our friends won't always tell us. They are too kind, or unkind. Our relatives often won't tell us because they don't want to admit there is anything wrong with us. Our minister won't tell us because he often does not know.

Nobody on earth can search your heart as well as yourself, by God's help. Each of us knows the need of an inward look.

V

Last of all, Holy Communion is also an outward look. Not just on Beacon street, but out all over the heart-broken world that so needs all we can do.

I want to read a letter from a soldier who wants to share our food. Listen to some of his words:

"It is strange to return home. Even after a month in America I haven't gotten used to the things in the stores, and the food. The feeling haunts me while I am enjoying these luxuries to the fullest—perhaps American overabundance might be as abnormal in these times as lack of bare living necessities is in other places. A banana split, a delicious dessert cannot take away the image of hollow-eyed civilians scraping the bottom of a garbage can for food, a long line of British housewives waiting for horse meat, the looks of German children looking at army rations and rubbing their stomachs and saying, 'Cutlets,' their word for American meat. One cultured German civilian in Berlin asked for grease to put on his black bread."

No one more than a returned veteran appreciates the greatness of America in turning out an endless stream of tanks, guns and clothing in war while fulfilling its own domestic needs, and scarcely showing outward sign of strain or material hardship. It is when we have a full realization of conditions abroad that we are anxious to take steps to expedite sharing surplus food and clothing and other essentials with those who urgently need them.

Holy Communion, this bread and this cup, are meant to make us feel the ache of the world's physical and spiritual hunger until we really do something about it, both near at home and farther afield.

Our communion with Christ will lead us to look clearly in these five directions, at this Lenten season of 1946: upward to God, backward in history, forward in faith, inward in honesty and outward in healing.

TODAY we confront a new phenomenon. A generation has lost God and the whole spiritual dimension of life. After a second world war in one generation half the people of England are worse than heathens in that they believe in nothing, not even in themselves. And the church has lost its vision, vitality and spiritual authority because it has succumbed to spiritual anemia, and is infected with the spirit of self-sufficient humanism.

BISHOP OF ROCHESTER (England).

If the United States chooses a policy of military might we are going to have to fight again. And if we win, what we win will not be worth having.

OWEN J. ROBERTS.

The Undiscouraged Christ

BY THOMAS MEGAHEY

TOO MANY of us have joined the band of toy drum major. We get in step and march playing our little drums and whistles. We feel somehow this is a lot of fun, only to find that marching forward we land in the place where we started, we have merely gone around the block, and here we are, where we started.



We are so susceptible to modern catch phrases, such as "over the top," "forward march," "united we stand," "the American way of life," that we no longer examine them to see their real meaning. Yet, having said that, let us also say that some of

slogans have for many a deep fountain of meaning and importance. For the most of us, however, slogans are but catch phrases which enable us to get our feet upon something in the midst of sinking sand.

Take such a simple phrase as, "I am going fishing." What harm is there in that, particularly if you live in the vicinity of the Mississippi river? Yet one of the most tragic phrases that I recall was that one, for it seemed to express the sentiment of a man who was groping for something he "had loved long since but lost awhile." A phrase that in itself was very simple and apparently harmless, yet one that had significant meaning and implication.

Such a phrase constitutes my text for this morning. It is taken from the Gospel of John, chapter 21, verse the third. Seven of the disciples were gathered at the Sea of Tiberias. Perhaps they had been discussing the events of the last few days, their confusion, their bewilderment, their doubt as to what was all leading, when suddenly Peter exclaimed, "I am going fishing," and the others said, "Well, we are too."

I

First of all, we find in this simple statement an apparent repudiation of Peter's calling.

Was it not to this same Peter that Jesus but a few years previously had thrown out the challenge of his lifetime—"Do not be afraid, Peter; from today on you shall no longer catch fish, rather shall you catch men." From that day on, the fishing nets no longer held any spell for him. He was as a man bent upon some great mission: ascending the heights of the mountain of temptation, seeing men and women restored to health, seeing the dead rise and discouraged humanity made strong through a power that was not theirs.

He had seen Christ touch life at all its ebbs and tides, watched him fight the opposition of hate and jealousy without losing his poise or lowering his spirit.

of supreme worth, felt the magnetism of love-power—his unfailing faith in human nature transfigured by grace divine. Peter had seen all this. He entered into the tomb, saw it empty. That same night they had locked themselves in a room of fear. Jesus appeared to them and commended them: "As the Father hath sent me as his messenger, so I am sending you."

After having all this enrichment, he blurted out, "I am going to fish!" And the rest said, "We're going, too." In a disturbed world they wanted to go somewhere and the natural tendency was to resort to old ways—"we go a fishing."

As the future of the church swayed in the balance, evening, when these seven men, who constituted a part of the church, gave way to temptation! In days like ours we had better ask, "Where are you going from here?" Contemporary history is writing a chapter, and it points to a future whose horizon is lined with foreboding storms. For we, too, are going out into the setting rays of the sun, and the light alone shall be our protection.

We are anxious that we may do something, get on with it, matters little what we do, but let us do it. Turn to the old things again of keeping active, not having an objective or purpose—that would involve a analysis and deep perception—but we cannot have this silence that bears down upon us with such overtones that we get frantic and escape it through a form of activity.

"Where are you going from here, Peter?" "Oh, I know, I am going out there to fish." So out they went.

Well, here we stand on the same coast line. "Where are you going from here?" And the night covers the cry of our own fears and doubts. Think not that the church stands alone in this bewilderment. It is not. For there stands the state equally confused.

Dr. Homrighausen in his book *Christianity in America* makes this daring statement: "The churches, in this confusion, tried to answer it by experimenting with programs in which the constant factors of the faith were forced into such molds that the churches did not know what was objective and what was subjective. This is how we came to regard a Christian as a moral person or as a 'religious' person." Then he concludes by saying: "Our conformity to the American temper has robbed us of our foundation."

As "temper," the desire to do, the craving for movement and change, has made us conscious of man's progress at the cost of pushing God out. We are so busy with "democracy" and "liberty" that we have minimized Christianity. Our gospel has become one of power and ability, conquest through might and the pre-eminence of industrial power. The church, too, has been gathered into the swirl. The human side of the faith has been emphasized at the expense of the spiritual. "Where are we going?" Certainly we, too, are going out into the night. What is out there shall determine our future course.

And they went—with what result? They toiled all

night and caught nothing. They were alone, discouraged and tired. But as the shadows lifted, lo! someone was on the shore watching. They had not been alone at all. The shadows had hid him from their view, but all through the night his love and thoughts were with them, for there on the shore was the undiscouraged Christ.

II

The undiscouraged Christ! But then, that is always like him. In the night when we are alone on the wide expanse of sea, he is always watching.

I think I can see him as he watches these men put out to sea, as he lovingly and longingly follows their efforts. He watches them put in shallow water as a last resort to catch fish and then he calls to them in terms of affection: "Lads, have you caught anything yet?" They supposed it was someone anxious to buy fish from them. So they answered, No! Then this stranger said: "Why do you not try the other side? Cast the nets in there and you will find fish." You know the result—the nets were filled. John, the disciple of keen insight and perception, whispered to Peter: "It is the Master."

Fish were forgotten; even the fact that he had only his undervest on mattered little to Peter. He grabbed his coat and jumped into the cold water; the Master was there on the shore. There was restlessness which even the old habits and tasks could not satisfy. It was deeper than that. But in the dimness of the morning shadows, against the background of the receding night, the Master came, and that was enough for Peter. The undiscouraged Christ met them in the midst of their bewilderment.

It is true Christ is always there, calling to us even when we do not know where we are going from here. He meets us and calls us with the challenge, "Have we found enough to justify our work?" Then he says, "Here is the place where you can get results." Note that there is no rebuke, no harshness, but rather a kind inquiry. He knew their hearts and their bewilderment, but he remained the undaunted and undiscouraged One.

He met them at the place where they needed him the most. That is just like him. Bruce Evans pens it for us in these words:

Just when I am disheartened, just when with cares oppressed,

Just when my way is darkest, just when I am distressed,
Then is my Savior near me, he knows my every care;
Jesus will never leave me, he helps my burdens bear.
Just when the fight is thickest, just when with fear I shake,

Then comes a still small whisper, Fear not, my child,
I'm near;

Jesus has grace sufficient to conquer all my fear.

Surely it must have been this assurance that called to Peter. Though we fail and stammer in our efforts to do his bidding, yet he ever believes in us. This undiscouraged Christ could follow the feeble effort of those in whom he had such implicit trust, and all through the night he watched over them, still loving

them and believing in them. He knew the restlessness of their soul, and that night when the shadows were deepest a lone figure could be seen straining through the dark, looking for a small boat containing seven men, men in whom he placed such confidence that his Father had willed that these should be the proclaimers of the Good News. He knew that he would win. He was not discouraged. Tempests may blow, storms may descend, the cables may strain and the anchors may even drag; still he waits serene, confident that the future is his and that he "shall rule for ever and ever."

How encouraging it is for us to know, when we are wondering "where do we go from here?"—to know that he confidently waits along the shore; that when we are most distressed, he calls through the bewilderment, "Here is the place to achieve," here is the place where we may get direction, here is the place where we may let down the nets. He takes our doubts and disappointments and in their place he pleads with us to do great things, "to endure as seeing him who is invisible"—for only he who sees the invisible can do the impossible. With renewed confidence born out of a thrilling experience, he meets us at the dawn and gives directions.

III

Christ led them out of their discouragement to a place of inner examination and positive commitment.

The King James Version loses much meaning in the dialogue which followed the breakfast that early morning. Jesus was conscious of the needs of their body, so he had breakfast ready. "Come and break your fast," was his invitation.

Looking upon this turbulent soul of a great man, he asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these others?" Three times the question was asked, but with different meaning each time. The first time Jesus asked if Peter loved him (*agapao*), but Peter replied, "Lord, you know that I have affection for you" (*phileo*). "Do you love (*agapao*) me?" "I have affection . . ." (*phileo*). "Peter, do you really have affection for me?" Then was Peter grieved because Jesus came down from the high standard of love to the standard of friendship. And yet, after turning Peter's thoughts to an examination of himself, this undiscouraged One now challenged him to a positive commitment.

Where do we go from here? "Well," Jesus says: "Here it is—follow me." And what he said that morning on the beach is still challenging for our day. Where do we go from here? Many hearts are trying to find the answer. Jesus says, "Follow me." It is true that his challenge is not to human ingenuity, nor to any estimate of successful business enterprise, nor to a successful career. That challenge of Christ is for human obedience. That is all. Yet what a simple thing to set over against the complexities of our lives! But Jesus knew that such simple things as following him in honesty, truthfulness, purity, justice, mercy, goodness and love shall bring the dawn!

For goodness sake, Peter, stop telling over and over

again the tragedies of the world. We are all acquainted with them. Why speak of the storm upon the zones? We can all see them. Yet many of us are in such fantasy. We really think that by continuing to talk about these heartaches and headaches we are contributing to the good of humanity. Listen to the conferences, your special committee meetings, executive meetings, your boards of directors—all having a glorious time recoloring the ills of the twentieth century. What is the good in rehearsing a troubles of life and underscoring them? Jesus says, "Here is the way out—Follow me."

Peter, I know the bewilderment of your heart, the tragedy of your day, the uncertainty of your future, but over against all that, "Follow me."

Yes, our minds may be befuddled, but there is a mind which is not. Among all the complexities of modern life, in the midst of all our uncertain gropings, there is a way through, and Christ knew that. Somehow that, too, strengthens me. For I too come to the place where I ask, Where do I go from here? There I see on the shore, serene and eternal, looking to me and pointing a way through the forest of life to a highway of God, where men and women, out of their bewilderment and confused living now have a perspective, a goal—they know where they go from here.

For they, too, like Peter of old, heard the Master call, "Follow me." They follow with simple faith that transforms life and living. They face the future as it rolls toward them with steadfast look and a serene countenance. For the Christ who has called "Follow me" is leading them through bewilderment to a new day.

In the very act of affirming himself, man has affirmed himself. He has conquered the earth, he has conquered the heavens, but his assurance in himself has been dwarfed and insignificant, he is left to contend in the vast space he has discovered. When man has moved away from the spiritual moorings of his life he has lost himself from the deeps and went to the shallows.

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV

If the Lord did not answer prayer, I could not stand it. And if I did not believe in a God who works his will with nations, I should despair of the Republic.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE THRONE of the united world is not a chair of state; its emblems are not scepter, orb and sword. It is a cross, and the crown is made of thorns. It is for the worshipers at the cross of Christ that we set our hearts to win for the world the true peace.

WILLIAM TEMPLE

TAKE all of this book [the Bible] upon reason and common sense, you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a happier and better man.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Why Do We Have Easter?

A SERMON FOR CHILDREN BY VIRGIL E. FOSTER

Why do we have Easter? Let me tell you a story which will partly explain it. Yesterday when I was out in the country. Beyond the village of Manchester a few miles I saw some cottages. One had been built too close to a creek and the soil had been washed away from under it, so that it stuck out over the water. One of these there will be a big rain and the water will wash some more of that sandy soil. Then the cottage will tumble into the creek and be washed into the river. A short distance from that cottage was a rocky cliff, overlooking the valley. Out on a strong rock knob of the cliff was a cottage. The winds might blow around it, the rains beat upon it; but that cottage would remain—because it is built upon solid rock. Long after the cottage down the creek has been washed away and forgotten, the cottage on the cliff will be standing for some family to enjoy.

ON ROCK OR SAND?

People have always built their houses that way: on rock and some on sand. Jesus spoke of this 2000 years ago. At the close of his Sermon on the Mount he said that building our lives upon the principles which he taught in his sermon is like building a house on solid rock; but ignoring those principles and building our lives is like building a house upon sand that is washed away.

Let me take you boys and girls out into the country where I saw those cottages, and let you pick out a gift from me any spot which you might choose upon which to build your summer cottage, I don't think any of you would pick that crumbling sand. I think each of you would pick out a spot on the hard ground or on the rock cliff.

Just as in the church and church school you have the liberty to choose the kind of principles upon

which to build your lives. What is more, you have the opportunity to go right to work building upon that foundation. Jesus gave us a number of ideas which are like solid rock when we build upon them. For example, if you read the first part of that Sermon on the Mount, you will find what are called the Beatitudes.

"Happy are the boys and girls who try always to do what is right," Jesus meant—though of course he did not use just those words. "Happy are the merciful—those who are kind and considerate," for they build upon a solid foundation. "Happy are the young people who are clean, in their hearts," for the storms of life will not sweep them off their feet. "Blessed are they who are always friendly and do not go around stirring up trouble," for they are like a man who builds his house upon solid rock.

Jesus not only taught those principles to other people; he built his own life upon them. They were such a firm foundation for him that even death did not sweep away his life or his influence. That is why we have Easter. Other people believed what Jesus said. So many of them have built their lives upon the good, solid teachings of Jesus and have found that it is like having a house built on solid rock, that they celebrate Easter and invite you and me to build our lives that way.

WE SEE on every side either men of no religion at all or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight and should rejoice if by any means we might convince some that there is a better religion to be attained—a religion worthy of the God who gave it. And this we conceive to be none other than love—the love of God and of all mankind.

JOHN WESLEY.

A Pastoral Prayer

By FREDERICK W. BACKEMEYER

OUR GOD of love and mercy, we bow before Thee in the tender memories of Calvary. How unbecomingly it would be for us to take Thy mercy lightly, and cast our glance at the cross for a brief time, only to go on and be as we were before ascending unto the throne of the Lord! May we have more love for Thee, O Savior of men, as we reach through time and space to stand for a time at Golgotha's heights and be given for us where the deepest shadows of hell.

Give us penitent hearts today. God, give us loving hearts today. God, give us forgiving and merciful hearts in this hour. Grant us such a floodtide of spiritual passion and strength that as we bring our

witness to the world hearts may be won, faces may be turned toward the cross, and a new power may come to Thy people.

Comfort all those who sorrow, we pray. Give renewed health to all who are stricken in body or mind or spirit, and give peace to every troubled heart. Speak gently to the erring, and forgive those who are truly penitent. Forgive us all of our sins. Let righteousness and mercy prevail in us, and through us in the world about us.

Bless Thou, we pray, the guests assembled in Thy House today, the strangers who know us not, but who know our Lord and theirs. And grant us all Thy peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Compensations of the Christian Ministry

By HERBERT BOOTH SMITH

LONG AGO a man asked the question of Jesus whether his ministry was worth while. "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all and followed thee; what then shall we have?" The first half of Peter's sentence has often been emphasized. Volumes have been written on the sacrifices of the ministry. I propose to turn to the second part of his statement and to answer his question if I can. What do we ministers have, what compensations and rewards, that are denied to others not in the King's business?

At the outset it will be conceded that we do not have great financial recompense. The man who deliberately enters the ministry for what he can get out of it in dollars and cents puts a pretty low estimate on his ability as a wage earner. If what the average church pays him is all he is worth, then he is not good enough for the pulpit.

It is true that the average wage of the minister is below that of the day laborer, as statistics show. Even in the Presbyterian Church one clergyman in every eight comes sooner or later to be a beneficiary of the Board of Ministerial Relief. But there are other rewards besides those of money. What are some of them?

• *Companionship With Christ*

For one thing, there is the compensation of companionship with Christ. That was the simplest answer Jesus could have given to Simon. "You have left family and friends, but you have Me." The first two requisites of an apostle were, that he must have been with Christ and he must have seen the risen Savior. So we modern apostles ought so to live as to impress others with the fact that we have been with Jesus. One thinks of that great-souled African bishop who, when he was asked whether he believed Jesus rose from the dead, replied: "I know it; I talked with him this morning." Like unto him was that great scholar of the church who was accustomed to close his daily studies with a brief word of comradeship-prayer. He was wont to say: "Dear Lord, we are on the same old terms as we have been these long years. Good-night."

It may be argued that one does not have to be an ordained clergyman to be a comrade of God. That is perfectly true; but the point I am trying to make is that the minister is

compelled by his very calling to cultivate the companionship of Christ; because his vocation has to do with taking the things of Christ and showing them to the world, and naturally he cannot introduce others to Jesus unless he knows him pretty well himself. Alexander Maclaren once gave a young minister these three rules: "First—Sustain quiet fellowship with



HERBERT B. SMITH

God. Second—Keep regularly the habits of the student life. Third—Acquire the power to say no." (Referring to the declination of all sorts of cheap engagements). You notice which one he put first.

• *The Privilege of Being a 'Learner'*

We might name, as a second compensation, the privilege of learning. The word "disciple" means "learner" or "student." When the Twelve left all and followed Christ they became scholars in his school; and one of the great privileges of the Christian minister today is that of delving down into the deep things of God and searching for eternal truth. A keen critic has said that the two besetting sins of the ministry are lying and laziness. Certainly the man in the pulpit must be real, and he must also be a student. When Maclaren was asked his method of sermon preparation he humorously replied that it was sitting in his chair and looking at the backs of Meyer's Commentaries. But we know what he meant—that he sat in his chair and meditated until he had thought his way through some great truth before he looked to see

what others had to say about it. It is great to think your way through some gigantic truth and dig out the mines of rich ore! One of the modern Greek scholars says the verb which Paul uses when he tells Timothy to be instant in season, out of season, should be translated "Be contemporaneous; be up-to-date." To obey this injunction in an enlightenment and progress requires continual study.

The ancient controversy over evolution comes to mind at this point. A certain venerable preacher noted in a book on evolution on the desk of a clergyman he was visiting. "Did you read such stuff?" he asked. "Yes, not?" The minister who was asked to reach . . . "Bah! It is all devil." "Did you study *The Origin of Species*?" "Yes, I looked into it when it first came out, and I put it up my mind about it then." And by the way, was the book one of the keenest scientific thinkers of the past century confessed that after he had read it a seventh time he was more convinced than ever before that it was the most difficult books to read that was ever written. Consequently, ignorance won't do in the ministry today.

• *A Speaker for the Eternal*

A third compensation is the privilege of preaching. Dr. Patton used to say to his students at Princeton University: "Young gentlemen, I envy you. Yours is the greatest forum the world offers." He was right. Think of the privilege of standing before a whole congregation as the ambassador of Most High God! When John Mott was offered the position of ambassador to China, you remember he preferred to remain an ambassador to college youth. The preacher is a subsidized sycophant. He is not paid entertainer of a fashionable society. He is a speaker for the Eternal.

A prophet has been defined as a man cannonaded on this side of the world and canonized on the other side. A true prophet will not be afraid of the non of either sort. If the world is a man a halo payable in eternity always offers him at the same time a crown of thorns payable immediately. But while there are thorns in the pathway of the prophets, there are golden opportunities also. "To go to brighter worlds and lead the way is a task worthy of an archangel. Somebody ought to tell young

today what a delight it is to The expression "as dull as a" is out of date, and ought to be dropped. The word "sermon" logically means "thrust" and a sermon is usually not dull, especially when who receives it.

• *The Wrong Kind of Preaching*

per described the wrong type of preacher in the following words: "The man who mounts the rostrum with a skip, who skips down again; pronounces a text, who skips down again; and, reading what they have never wrote, who skips down again; fifteen minutes, huddle up their work, who skips down again; with a well-bred whisper close to the scene."

on Simpson once said that if his clergy were entirely frank, they would preface their sermons as follows: "I have to preach to you tonight because it happens to be my turn to preach. I am no preacher and I do not profess to be anything but an organizer of boys' clubs. However, as it happens to be my turn to preach, I thought I had better take the gospel for the day and say something about it as I possibly can. My poverty of invention obliges me to conclude."

! preachers of this kind are not needed in England. Would God they were! But if we get back to the Old Testament prototype of the modern preacher in the person of the ancient prophet, and if we remember that of the three Hebrew words translated "see" two mean to "see" and "show," and means to "speak," we shall discover that the preacher must be a seer who sees the truth of God and speaks it out.

• *Shepherding the Sheep*

fourth compensation is that of shepherding. Every minister ought to have some side line, some hobby, to get him out of the study and keep him from getting into an ecclesiastical groove. Some preachers are more famous for their side lines than for their preaching. There was Henry Drummond's "Natural Law"; and John Ruskin, who discovered oxygen; and Charles Darwin, who discovered the crepe-ring; and Father Secchi in spectroscopy; and Dr. Buckland in geology; and Malthus in economics. No better hobby than any of these. A man may become prominent in ringing doorbells. Thoreau himself a self-appointed inspector of doorbells. Our old professor of homiletics suggested that when we were tired and weary and wanted exercise, we should try doorbells instead of bells.

one reads the story of Elisha and the Shunammite woman, he be-

comes convinced that this particular prophet had the true shepherd's heart. He liked to call on people and they loved to have him around. Rev. Dr. Elijah might have been a much abler preacher, but it was Brother Elisha whom folks wanted to have as a guest in their homes. It is a blessed experience to follow in his train. The modern pastor does not expect houses to be remodeled for his benefit, but he does expect doors to be gladly opened at his coming, and hearts as well. That was a good prayer that was offered by a layman for his minister: "Grant that he may go about among his people with the dignity of a man who has a message from God, and the humility of a man for whom Christ died."

One of the canons of St. Paul's Cathedral laments the fact that one of the difficulties of cathedral preaching is that there is no pastoral relationship between speaker and audience. He is preaching to a procession of strangers. The ordinary pastor, on the other hand, is preaching to his own flock, to those in whose homes he is a familiar friend. And what a joy it is to be the shepherd of souls, to be the confidant of your people, their counselor and guide in spiritual things! What a compliment that was to Henry Drummond's shepherd's heart, when one of his humble parishioners knocked at the door of his study one Saturday night and asked him to call on her dying husband. "Mr. Drummond, come with me. My husband is dying and I do not think he will know you. I doubt if he can either see you or hear what you say; but I want him to have a breath of you about him before he dies." It is worth much to be wanted in the death-chamber because you carry about with you the atmosphere of heaven.

• *Partner of Christ in a Great Task*

Finally, there is the compensation of partnership with Christ in the biggest task in the world, helping to bring in the kingdom of God. Jesus could have done the job by himself, but he prefers to share the task with chosen men whom he calls his ministers or servants; yes, his friends. If that opportunity doesn't make a man's heart throb, then what will? Emerson said that the ordinary minister enters the pulpit with the cringe of an apology. Why should any man apologize for being one of the saviors of the human race?

I have come to a new interpretation of the reply which Jesus made to Peter's question as to the rewards of service. Christ said that in the new social order, when the Kingdom had come, the twelve disciples should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. One feels that the ministers of Christ are seated on

thrones today. This does not mean that they are pedestaled saints to be idolized by the Ladies' Aid Society and to be invited to pink teas, but that they have the moral leadership of the community in their hands. The modern preacher has a bigger job than that of paid sermonizer or salaried visitor. His parish is far broader than his church. Nothing human is foreign to him. Every great issue of the day which has a moral bearing is a fair field for the minister to enter.

• *Great Achievements of Some Ministers*

Glance for a moment at some things ministers have done outside the pulpit. Think of Stephen Langton leading the people of England to demand their rights from King John. Think of those brave clergy who sat in Simon de Montfort's Parliament and really started the British House of Commons. Think of Archbishop Hubert championing the cause of the people against King Richard, and Archbishop Winchelsea bringing Edward I. to terms. It was Theobald of Canterbury who prohibited the sale of children, just as it was the preaching of Wulfstan and Lanfranc which drove the slave trade from British ports. One might go on to speak of Anselm and Becket and DeBarri and the Lollards and John Ball, "the mad priest of Kent," and scores of others. Suffice it to say that the succession in which we ministers hold office is a worthy one, and we need not apologize for the fraternity of the cross when we delve into history and see what our forbears have done.

Shall we not then take heart, with a new appreciation of our high calling? Shall we not revise our book-keeping and emphasize anew the compensations of our craft? Henry van Dyke once said to our class that the finest line in Tennyson occurs in the dramatic scene where Arthur bids farewell to his guilty queen Guinevere; he turns his back on the past, faces the struggle of the future and says: "Now must I hence. Through the thick night I hear the trumpet blow." Brethren, the night is thick and dark, but the trumpet calls us on, up the hills, to the victory of the King!

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOR the past twenty-eight years Rev. RALPH W. SOCKMAN has ministered at Christ Church (formerly Madison Avenue Methodist Church), New York. From 1915 to 1927 he was associate minister. He has a nationwide hearing through his Sunday radio broadcasts and has written many books of which the best known titles are *Recoveries in Religion*, *The Highway of God* and *Date With Destiny*.

Rev. RALPH C. MCAFEE has been minister of the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Erie, Pa., since 1938. In earlier years he served as executive secretary of the councils of churches in Portland, Ore., Kansas City, Mo., and Detroit, Mich.—1920-38. He is a son and grandson of former presidents of Park College, Parkville, Mo.

Ordained in the Episcopal Church, Rev. ELMER S. FREEMAN served parishes in California, the Hawaiian Islands and New York state. Resigning orders in the Episcopal Church, he studied at Chicago Theological Seminary and became pastor of Essex Community Church, Chicago, in 1937. About three years ago he went to First Congregational Church, Menasha, Wis. He has recently published a book on *The Lord's Supper in Protestantism*.

Having received his theological education at Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago, and the Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, Pa., Rev. EDWARD K. ZEIGLER held pastorates (Church of the Brethren) in Johnson City, Tenn., and York, Pa. He served as a missionary under the Church of the Brethren in India, 1931-39. He is now a professor of religion at Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind. For several years he has represented his church on the Federal Council—on its execu-

tive committee and on several commissions. He has written a number of books on the subject of worship.

All the pastorates of Rev. MURRAY A. FIGG have been in the North East Ohio conference of the Methodist Church; he is now in his third year at Brilliant, having gone to that charge from St. Paul's Church, Cleveland. At present he is secretary of the Federation for Social Service of the conference, also president of the Religious and Race Council of Jefferson county. Youth work has claimed much of his time.

In 1925 Rev. CARL HEATH KOPF graduated from Princeton University where he studied political science, intending to become a lawyer. He was instructor in history of Christianity at Princeton, 1925-26. He has pursued graduate study in theology at Princeton and Boston U. School of Theology, he filled preaching posts in Roxbury and Salem, Mass., and in 1933 went to Princeton as minister of Mount Vernon Church, his present charge. He is on the news staff of the *Christian Century*.

Born in Ireland, Rev. THOMAS MEGAHEY came to this country as a youth. His later education was received at Dubuque University (Iowa) and the Presbyterian Seminary in Dubuque. He has recently come from the Presbyterian Church in Dubuque to Faith Presbyterian Church, Chicago.

Rev. FREDERICK W. BACKEMEYER is minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Gary, Ind.

Rev. HERBERT B. SMITH is minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Burlingame, Calif. For more than a quarter-century he was minister of Immanuel Church, Los Angeles, the second-largest church of that denomination in the country.

Rev. VIRGIL E. FOSTER is associate minister of the Second Congregational Church, West Newton, Mass.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

E. PAUL HOVEY, United Churches, Hot Springs, S. D. "A Plan for the Postwar World." Matt. 28:19—"Go and make disciples of all . . ."

WALTER A. SCHOLTEN, Arlington Reformed, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. "The Disconcerting Christ." Matt. 26:31—"Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all be disconcerted over me tonight.'" (Moffatt)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

.....
Title of sermon

.....
Text used (write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

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Address

WILLIAM A. JACOBS, Pilgrim Congregational, Oak Park, Ill. "Is Modern Man Obsolete?" Psalm 8:4—"Venerable God, I consider . . . What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

R. M. COURTNEY, Salisbury District, Salisbury, N. H. "Give God a Chance!" 2 Chron. 16:9—"For the word of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him."

HERBERT W. HAHN, Methodist, So. Bethlehem, N. C. "Christ and the Ideals of Brotherhood." Matt. 23:11—"One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

J. KENDRICK BALLOU, Congregational, Sunnyvale, Cal. "What Religion Does." 2 Cor. 10:5—"I demolish theories and any rampart thrown up to resist the knowledge of God, I take every project prisoner to make it obey Christ." (Moffatt)

THOMAS F. GALLAHER, Oak Cliff Presbyterian, Dallas, Tex. "Teamwork for Victory." Exod. 17:12—"Moses and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands."

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

WHAT has Protestantism to say in this crisis hour of world and national history? The Federal Council of Churches was called in special session at Columbus, O., to make answer to this question. Catholicism had already spoken, through several allocutions of the Pope. Protestantism has no such authoritative voice, and wants none. But through the Federal Council the trusted leaders of 25 denominations gave democratic expression to the church's share of responsibility to save mankind from utter chaos. Has a meeting of this body been charged with a more vibrant and anxious feeling. I can here mention three things that impressed me. First was the emphasis on world order. The Council gave unanimous support to the U.N.O., called for universal disarmament, advocated trusteeship rather than outright possession of whatever islands this country has taken from Japan, urged vastly increased aid in food, clothing and money for European sufferers, approved aid to Britain (a question which I think should have been discussed), and protested against mass expulsions and territorial changes without the consent of the populations involved. Second, I was deeply impressed by the pronouncements on evangelism. A new note of urgency, but of substance of evangelical preaching, was introduced. Third, the report "The Atomic Bomb and the Christian Faith" prepared by the commission of 26 theologians was the first utterance of the meeting. By a parliamentary vote it was referred to the executive committee instead of being "received and submitted to the members for consideration and study." Perhaps the executive committee will see that this is done.

The Book of the Month

THE NEW LEVIATHAN. By Paul Hutchinson. Willett, Clark & Company, \$2.00.

THIS is a momentous book. I had intended to make my first sentence say a *terrifying* book, but I drew back and wrote "momentous." It shaken me inwardly as no writing has done in a long time. Dr. Hutchinson, my colleague in The Christian Century, has looked out upon the world with eyes that pierce the shams and disguises beneath which the professional optimism of statesmen and churchmen hide the realities of our human present. What he sees is the huge, stark figure of an omniscient state arising everywhere on the horizon left by the war. This is the new Leviathan. It not only threatens to devour our liberties, but has already begun to devour them. It not only threatens to moralize democracy, but has already begun to undermine it. Its encroachments on the domains reserved by our Constitution to "the people" have

actually proceeded far toward the totalitarianism which we vainly imagined our late war was waged to destroy. The American church itself is threatened by this monster, and does not know how imminent is the possibility that it too may find itself bound as the German church was bound. With innumerable facts, Dr. Hutchinson supports and clarifies his thesis. These facts pile up into a veritable pyramid of documentation. Many of them are found in hidden places where the reader would not suspect that they existed. The author drags them into the light and makes us look at them squarely. You will not find anywhere a more realistic analysis of the indirections, the stupidities and the naiveté of the church, coupled with so profound a conviction that only the Christian church has what the world most needs for its salvation.

A Thought for the Month

THE RESURRECTION was the window through which the first disciples looked back upon their experience in companionship with Jesus. It completely changed their outlook. They had been confused and baffled by Jesus' teaching, his manner of life and finally by his crucifixion.

The Easter Window

Their confusion arose on the one hand from their devoted attachment to him and the expectancy which he aroused in them, and on the other hand, from his strange behavior which seemed to belie their hopes. His death left them in utter despair. They returned to their homes and their nets. But his reappearance opened their eyes. They now saw all that had occurred in a new light. Everything fell into a pattern. God had actually *sent* Jesus, they said, and all that had happened was revelatory. The teaching of Jesus was now seen as the law of God's Kingdom. His love was seen as the unique manifestation of the love of God. His death on the cross was seen as the unveiling of God's own vicarious and redemptive suffering in and for man's sin. And the resurrection itself was seen as God's pledge that the meanings which they saw in these events were true. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that Christianity became a living faith because of the resurrection. I am not concerned to know the precise nature of this resurrection fact—whether the physical body of Jesus was resuscitated or whether he appeared in some other form. There are divergencies in the account. On the whole, I stand with Paul who denied the resuscitation concept and based his argument upon the concept of a "spiritual" body. Paul's statement is earlier than our earliest Gospel. But the manner of the resurrection is not important. The fact of the resurrection is supremely important, and the fact cannot be denied.

Paul Clayton Newman

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- VIII The Dignity of Ownership
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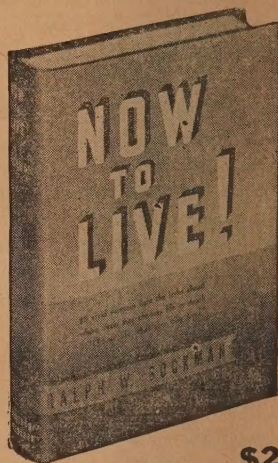
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THE AUTHOR



Dr. Sockman has been minister of Christ Church, Methodist, New York City, since 1917, and is known and loved throughout the nation for his sermons broadcast from the NBC "National Radio Pulpit." His previous books include *DATE WITH DESTINY*, *THE HIGHWAY OF GOD*, *LIFE FOR TOMORROW* AND *THE PARADOXES OF JESUS*.

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